

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01
INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15
USIA-06 MCT-01 ACDA-12 OMB-01 TRSE-00 EB-08 FAA-00
DOTE-00 IO-13 /106 W

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R 221333Z FEB 78

FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5788

INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA

AMEMBASSY ATHENS

AMEMBASSY NICOSIA

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 CAIRO 05689

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS EG CY

SUBJECT: SADAT ON LARNACA INCIDENT

REF: CAIRO 5678 (NOTAL)

SUMMARY: SADAT BITTER ABOUT LARNACA INCIDENT AND ACCUSES KYPRIANOU OF "TREACHERY." GOE ACTING IN SUPPORT OF GLOBAL RESPONSIBILITY TO SUPPRESS INTERNATIONAL TERRORISM. CYPRIOT AUTHORITIES SHOULD HAVE BEEN DOING SAME, BUT INSTEAD TURNED ON EGYPTIAN COMMANDOS. EGYPT'S LONG-STANDING SUPPORT FOR GREEK CYPRIOTS, SADAT ASSERTED, HAS BEEN ILL REQUITED BY KYPRIANOU'S ACTION. SUCH EGYPTIAN SUPPORT CANNOT BE EXPECTED TO CONTINUE. CARAMANLIS HAS SOUGHT MEDIATE DISPUTE, BUT WHAT IS THERE TO MEDIATE? TEST OF CYPRIOT INTENTIONS WILL BE WHETHER THEY EVENTUALLY AGREE TO EXTRADITE THE TWO PALESTINIAN TERRORISTS TO EGYPT FOR PUNISHMENT OR, ALTERNATIVELY, METE OUT APPROPRIATE PUNISHMENT TO THEM DIRECTLY. SADAT'S REACTION MAY NOT BE BASED ON FULL KNOWLEDGE OF THE FACTS, SINCE WE HAVE OTHER INFORMATION THAT BOTH VP MUBARAK AND PRIMIN SALEM SEEKING TO COVER
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UP THE FACT THAT THEY DID NOT SPECIFICALLY ADVISE CYPRIOTS THAT COMMANDOS WERE BEING SENT. END SUMMARY.

1. MET WITH SADAT 1130 TODAY TO DISCUSS VARIOUS OUTSTANDING MATTERS. HE HAD JUST HELICOPTERED IN FROM ISMAILIA TO ATTEND FUNERAL OF FIFTEEN EGYPTIAN COMMANDOS KILLED IN LARNACA INCIDENT. UNDERSTANDABLY, THEREFORE, HE WAS

IN A BITTER MOOD.

2. AFTER THANKING ME FOR CONDOLENCES I HAD EXTENDED ON THE DEATH OF THE EGYPTIAN COMMANDOS, SADAT LAUNCHED INTO AN ATTACK ON CYPRUS GOVT. HIS SPECIAL IRE WAS RESERVED FOR KYPRIANOU. HE PROFESSED TO BE UNABLE TO UNDERSTAND LATTER'S ACTIONS. EVEN ADMITTING THE POSSIBILITY OF A COMMUNICATIONS BREAKDOWN BETWEEN GOE AND CYPRIOT AUTHORITIES, HE ARGUED THAT KYPRIANOU SHOULD HAVE COOPERATED IN ALLOWING THE EGYPTIAN COMMANDOS TO CAPTURE THE TWO PALESTINIAN TERRORISTS. EGYPT, HE ASSERTED, WAS FULFILLING AN INTERNATIONAL OBLIGATION TO ASSIST IN SUPPRESSING TERRORISM. GOC SHOULD HAVE BEEN DOING THE SAME. INSTEAD, KYPRIANOU AND THE CYPRIOT AUTHORITIES HAD SOUGHT TO GET THE PROBLEM OFF THEIR BACKS BY OFFERING SAFE CONDUCT AND PASSPORTS TO THE PALESTINIAN TERRORISTS. IT WOULD HAVE BEEN AN EASY THING TO CAPTURE THE TWO TERRORISTS HAD THE CYPRIOT AUTHORITIES REALLY WISHED TO DO SO. ALTERNATIVELY, IF THEY HAD SIMPLY ALLOWED THE EGYPTIAN COMMANDOS FIVE MINUTES, THE HOSTAGES COULD HAVE BEEN FREED AND THE TERRORISTS CAPTURED OR KILLED. THEREAFTER, HAD THE CYPRIOTS WISHED TO DO SO, THEY COULD HAVE HELD THE EGYPTIAN COMMANDOS PENDING NEGOTIATION OF THEIR RETURN. INSTEAD OF DOING THIS, AS GOE HAD EXPECTED OF A FRIENDLY, NON-ALIGNED STATE SUCH AS CYPRUS, THE CYPRIOT AUTHORITIES HAD ORDERED THAT THE EGYPTIAN COMMANDOS BE FIRED UPON. CONFIDENTIAL

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AS A RESULT, EGYPTIAN CASUALTIES HAD BEEN HIGH AND AN EGYPTIAN C-130 HAD BEEN DESTROYED.

3. SADAT SAID HE COULD NOT HELP BUT WONDER WHETHER KYPRIANOU AND HIS COLLEAGUES WERE CONSCIOUSLY ACTING IN BEHALF OF LIBYA AND THE REJECTIONISTS. HE RECALLED THAT EGYPT HAD IMMEDIATELY RECOGNIZED KYPRIANOU ON HIS ELECTION. IN CONTRAST, LIBYA AND OTHER ARAB REJECTIONIST STATES HAD NOT DONE SO. FOR YEARS, TOO, EGYPT HAD SUPPORTED MAKARIOS AND THE GREEK CYPRIOT POSITION. IT HAD EVEN IN THE PAST SENT ARMS TO THE GREEK CYPRIOTS. GOE'S LONG-STANDING FRIENDLY ATTITUDE TOWARD CYPRUS HAD BEEN ILL-REQUITED BY KYPRIANOU'S ACTION. KYPRIANOU, SADAT CONTINUED, HAD FORFEITED EGYPT'S FRIENDSHIP. HE HAD IN FACT BEEN GUILTY OF "TREACHERY" AGAINST EGYPT. IN DOING SO, THE CYPRIOT AUTHORITIES HAVE ALIENATED THE ONLY ARAB AND MUSLIM STATE THAT HAS SUPPORTED CYPRUS AGAINST THE TURKS. AT THE FUNERAL OF THE FIFTEEN COMMANDOS THERE HAD BEEN PUBLIC DEMONSTRATIONS CALLING FOR VENGEANCE. EGYPTIAN POLICY TOWARDS CYPRUS IS BEING REVIEWED. AFTER WHAT HE HAS DONE, KYPRIANOU CANNOT EXPECT EGYPTIAN SUPPORT AGAINST THE TURKS TO CONTINUE.

4. CARAMANLIS, SADAT SAID, HAD SENT HIM A MESSAGE YESTERDAY SEEKING TO MEDIATE THE DISPUTE. WHAT IS THERE TO MEDIATE, SADAT ASKED RHETORICALLY? THE CYPRIOT AUTHORITIES ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE DEATH OR WOUNDING OF THIRTY YOUNG EGYPTIAN COMMANDOS, WHOSE MISSION WAS THE SUPPRESSION OF INTERNATIONAL TERRORISM. THEY CAN HARDLY EXPECT EGYPT TO FORGIVE THEIR ACTION. THE CYPRIOTS WILL PAY FOR WHAT THEY DID (HE DID NOT SPELL OUT WHAT HE HAD IN MIND). THE TEST OF CYPRIOT INTENTIONS WILL BE WHETHER OR NOT THEY EXTRADITE THE TWO PALESTINIAN TERRORISTS. KYPRIANOU IS BEING EVASIVE ON THIS POINT,

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 CAIRO 05689

CONTENDING THE CASE IS SUBJUDICE. THIS IS NOT ENOUGH. EITHER THE CYPRIOT AUTHORITIES SHOULD METE OUT APPROPRIATE PUNISHMENT TO THE MURDERERS OF YUSUF AL-SIBAI OR TURN THEM OVER TO EGYPT.

5. COMMENT: SADAT, ALTHOUGH CONTENDING THE CASUALTIES WERE THE PRICE EGYPT HAS HAD TO PAY TO SUPPORT GLOBAL EFFORTS TO SUPPRESS TERRORISM, WAS CLEARLY DEEPLY UPSET ABOUT THE INCIDENT. HE CANNOT HELP BUT BE AWARE THAT, REGARDLESS OF CHEST BEATING ABOUT KYPRIANOU'S "TREACHERY," IT HAS TARNISHED HIS PUBLIC IMAGE. WE HAVE HAD OTHER INDICATIONS THAT SADAT MAY NOT BE FULLY AWARE OF THE FACTS AND THAT BOTH VP MUBARAK AND PRIMIN SALEM, WHO MASTER-MINDED (IF THIS IS THE RIGHT TERM) THE OPERATION, ARE SEEKING TO COVER UP THEIR OWN DELINQUENCY. SPECIFICALLY, IT IS INCREASINGLY CLEAR THAT THE CYPRIOTS WERE NOT

TOLD IN ADVANCE BY EITHER SALEM OR MUBARAK THAT COMMANDOS
WERE BEING SENT, BUT THIS ESSENTIAL FACT SEEMS TO HAVE
BEEN KEPT FROM SADAT. HE APPEARS TO BELIEVE THAT
KYPRIANOU KNEW ABOUT THE COMMANDOS. HE SEEMS DETERMINED
TO SUSPEND RELATIONS WITH CYPRUS AND HAS ALLOWED A PUBLIC
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DEMONSTRATION AGAINST THE CYPRIOT EMBASSY CHANCERY IN
ZAMALEK TODAY. CONCEIVABLY, A WILLINGNESS ON THE PART OF
THE CYPRIOT AUTHORITIES TO EXTRADITE THE TWO PALESTINIAN
TERRORISTS WOULD MOLLIFY HIM. EILTS

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